



BE LEAD AWARE BEFORE YOU REPAIR



Lead is a highly toxic metal that serves no purpose in the human body. Getting lead in your mouth or breathing it in may cause lead poisoning. Lead poisoning in children, even in small amounts, can cause permanent negative effects on a child's development and behavior. These effects include reduced IQ, learning disabilities, hyperactivity and irritability. Greater amounts of lead exposure can cause permanent brain damage and even death. In adults, lead poisoning causes high blood pressure, headaches, as well as memory and concentration problems. In pregnant women, lead can cause premature births, smaller babies, and decreased mental ability, learning disabilities and slowed growth in the infant.

What Does Remodeling Have to Do With Lead Poisoning?

Any home or apartment built before 1978 can have surfaces painted with lead-based paint. Home renovation projects such as sanding, cutting and demolition can create hazardous lead dust and chips. The invisible lead dust is easily breathed into the body and may also accumulate on toys or surfaces that children chew on or play near. A single high level of lead dust exposure is enough to cause lead poisoning!



Where's the Lead?



Lead can be found in paint, toys, soil, cosmetics, food etc. Breathing in or swallowing lead dust is the most common cause of lead poisoning. Lead dust is usually the result of chipping or peeling paint in old homes. This is because lead-based paint was used in homes until it was banned in 1978. These dust particles are so small, they cannot be seen entering the body. This is especially dangerous for small children because they chew on surfaces that may be contaminated. Also, they put their fingers in their mouths, which could cause instant exposure if their hands have lead dust on them.

How Can I Protect My Children?

Before starting a remodeling project on a home built before 1978, it is important that you check for lead. This can be done by contacting a licensed lead inspector. If you do not check for lead, it is important to assume that it is present and work safely.

General tips to follow when remodeling include working safe, clean and wet.

- All children's toys should be removed from the work area and plastic sheeting should be laid over floors and furniture that can't be removed from the room.
- It is best for children to be away from the work area entirely. Take them to a park or a friend's house while remodeling is going on.
- Always wet-clean surfaces that could have lead dust on them.
- A follow-up lead test should be conducted in the area after work is completed to determine if all lead dust has been cleaned up. Once the area is cleared, children may come back to it safely.

Working safe includes keeping all non-workers out of the work area, especially children and pregnant women. It also includes wearing the proper safety equipment when working. **Working clean** includes keeping the mess contained and thoroughly cleaning the area and yourself when finished working. **Working wet** includes spraying areas to be sanded or drilled with water to reduce the dust in the air.

General Safety Guidelines

- Regularly clean floors, windowsills, and other surfaces with soap and warm water.
- Wash bottles, pacifiers, stuffed animals and toys often.
- Have children clean their faces and hands before eating, after playing and before bed.
- Be sure that your children eat a healthy, nutritious diet. Iron, vitamin C and calcium help protect against the effects of lead.
- Children should eat 4-6 small meals a day because empty stomachs absorb more lead than full ones.
- Have your child tested for lead. A simple blood test can be performed by your healthcare provider or local health department.



For more information on contacting a lead inspector or other ways to work safely, contact:

Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services

Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

P.O. Box 570, Jefferson City, MO 65109

(573) 751-6102 or toll free (866) 628-9891

www.dhss.mo.gov/ChildhoodLead/index.html

